



## Policy statement

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This Policy details the Centre's procedures in relation to fees, methods of payment booking procedures and associated provisions.

## Strategies and practices

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- The Centre's *Fee Policy* is explained to parents at enrolment, and the necessary paperwork relating to fees is discussed and completed.
- The Centre ensures that, wherever possible, parents of children enrolled at the Centre are notified at least 14 days in advance of any change that will affect the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.
- The current fee schedule is published on the website.

## BOOKINGS

- Parents are responsible for booking their child into the Service and for notifying the Service if a child is going to be absent. For After School Care the absence should be notified by no later than 1pm or a no-show fee will be incurred.
- If a booking is permanent (see below) fees are payable for absences. The Child Care Benefit (CCB) is payable for up to 42 absences per annum. Additional absences may also be approved in special circumstances.
- Two weeks' notice is required for ongoing changes to permanent bookings, as separate from absences. Note: CCB is NOT payable if a child does not attend during a notice period and does not return to the service. In that case the parent is responsible for the full fee for the notice period.
- If a booking is casual and notice of cancellation is not received within 24 hours of the commencement time the fee will be charged and the attendance noted as an absence.
- Parents are advised to contact the Family Assistance Office directly to determine their eligibility for CCB before the child commences at the Centre.

## BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

### *Permanent Bookings*

- A permanent booking is one where the child attends for the same session each week during a term. Permanent bookings are entered for the full school term and notice periods apply to any changes.
- Fees are payable for absences for all permanent bookings including sick days, family holidays, school excursions and any other absence. Child Care Benefit is paid for a child's absences up to 42 days per child each financial year. The Service does not exchange days of care and does not arrange make up days.
- Fees are charged for all days of the week where a permanent booking is made including where Public Holidays or Pupil Free days fall within the term. However, where a Public Holiday or Pupil



Free day falls on the Monday of the first day of term, or the Friday of the last day of term, no fees will be charged.

- The Centre requires full two weeks written notice of an intention to change the days, or the number of days required, or to withdraw a child from the Centre. The two weeks' notice begins from the close of business on the day the Centre receives the written advice.

### **Casual bookings**

- Casual bookings are accepted up to 2pm on the day of attendance if spaces are available. Families are advised to provide as much notice as possible to ensure a place is available.
- If emergency care is required and no notice was possible, every effort will be made to accommodate the request within current legislative requirements.
- Casual bookings will not be accepted if fees are in arrears.
- Fees are charged for any casual booking cancelled with less than 1 working days' notice. Notice periods are:
  - For a Casual BSC booking, notice is required by no later than 10 am the day prior.
  - For a Casual ASC booking, notice is required by no later than 2:30 pm the day prior.
  - Cancellations are to be made by phone to the Centre on 43237483 or by email to [Amanda@gosfordcommunity.org.au](mailto:Amanda@gosfordcommunity.org.au)
  - Please Note: Text message to the service mobile are not accepted as notice.

### **VACATION CARE**

1. Bookings for Vacation Care must be made on the approved booking form.
2. Payment in full for the following week is due on the Friday prior to attendance and will be uploaded to the direct debit system on the previous day.
3. Any adjustments due to changes in CCB/CCR are made the following week once notification is received from Centrelink via the CCMS system.
4. Full fees, nett of CCB/CCR, are charged if attendance is cancelled with less than 5 working days' notice or if a child does not attend when booked in. Surcharges for activities may also be charged if the Centre is liable for these fees.

### **PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

- The service does not charge an enrolment fee.
- Accounts are payable in advance.
- Fees are uploaded according to the agreed schedule via the direct debit system each Thursday or Friday. Where a monthly schedule is agreed it will be on the agreed date.
- A significant discount is offered for payment via direct debit using the Hub-Debit system.
  - Parents have a choice of a weekly, fortnightly on a Thursday or monthly schedule on the week day of their choice.
  - For permanent bookings, the average fee is uploaded on the nominated day and is generally debited from the family's nominated account within 24 hours. Any adjustments to attendance, e.g. extra days or sessions, are charged at the end of the month.
  - Any fees incurred for dishonoured payments will be billed directly to the family.
  - The Service pays the costs of transaction except for Credit Cards.
- If not paying by direct debit, fees are to be kept two weeks in advance at all times. Late fees will apply if accounts are in arrears.



- A system generated receipt is available for all payments. The system generated receipt will show the child's name, the period of time for which the receipt is issued, the amount paid, and all other details required by regulations. If an overpayment is made, no change will be given but the excess will be credited to the family's account. However, if the child is not using the service on a regular basis, an application for refund will be accepted.
- Fee reminders are sent to any family one or more weeks late in the payment of fees. If the fees are not paid within the following week or an arrangement not entered into, the child's place at the Centre is at risk. A late fee is applied to any overdue fees. Fees more than 4 weeks overdue may be referred to a debt collection agency and any costs associated with recovery will be added to the account.
- Parents/caregivers can log on to the online "Hubworks" system. The following transactions can be undertaken:
  - Check account balances
  - Make additional payments
  - Change contact details
  - Update medical information
  - Download or print payment or usage information

### **SURCHARGES**

The Service charges a small Equipment Levy each term for all children attending Before and After School Care. These funds are used to purchase equipment and materials.

The following surcharges are levied to offset the administrative costs incurred by the Centre and are levied as applicable:

- No Show Fee: when no notice is given for non-attendance, when booked in to attend.
- Late Fee: charged for any child collected later than the Centre's closing time.
- Casual Fee: a flat weekly fee is levied per child for casual bookings
- Overdue Accounts Fee: A flat fee per family is charged on accounts more than 2 weeks overdue.

### **Responsibilities of parents**

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- To ensure fees are kept up-to-date.
- To ensure sufficient funds are available for direct debit payments.
- To keep the Centre informed of any changes in attendance (e.g. family holidays, other absences)
- To keep the Service informed of any changes in contact details including email addresses, phone numbers and emergency contacts.
- To respond promptly to communications from the Family Assistance Office to maintain CCB eligibility.

### **Links to other policies**

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- Attendance Policy
  - Enrolment and Orientation Policy
  - Interactions with Families Policy
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### **Sources**



- Childcare Service Handbook 2013-2014 - [https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/ed14-0053\\_ccs\\_-\\_child\\_care\\_service\\_handbook\\_v2\\_0.pdf](https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/ed14-0053_ccs_-_child_care_service_handbook_v2_0.pdf) accessed 15 November 2016
- Department of Education and training - Information for families using child care - <https://www.education.gov.au/fact-sheet-kit-families-using-child-care>
- Department of Education and training - <http://education.gov.au/>
- Department of Employment - <http://employment.gov.au/>

### Policy review

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The Centre encourages staff and parents to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Centre will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Centre's commitment to quality improvement. The Centre consults with relevant recognised authorities as part of the annual review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

**Date(s) reviewed:** 6 September 2016, 1 July 2017, 26 February 2018

**Next review Date:** 1 June 2018 and annually thereafter or whenever fees are amended.

### CURRENT FEE SCHEDULE Current as at 1 July 2017

#### Fees:

Our preferred payment system is by Direct Debit using approved software.

Fees paid by Direct Debit are:

1. Before School Care: \$17.00 per session
2. After School Care: \$27.00 per session
3. Vacation Care: \$55.00 per session\*

Fees paid by any other means are:

1. Before School Care: \$21.50 per session
2. After School Care: \$31.50 per session
3. Vacation Care: \$59.50 per session\*

\*Additional fees may apply for excursions or activities

#### Surcharges:

Equipment Levy	\$5.00 per child per term
No Show Fee:	\$20.00 per child
Late Pick Up Fee:	\$15.00 charged in ten minute intervals.
Casual Booking Fee:	\$5 per child per week
Overdue Accounts Fee:	\$10 per week per family

Fees are reviewed each year and changes take effect from 1 July.